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Amendment dated December 29, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of September 13, 2004

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please cancel claim 2, amend claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-13 and 15 and add new claims 16-21 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1(Currently Amended). An advertisement distribution system which receives advertisement contents from ~~at least one~~ advertisement provider terminals through a communications network, and provides ~~at least one~~ advertisement user terminals with the received advertisement contents through the communications network, said system comprising:

a receiver which receives from the advertisement provider terminals through the communication network advertisement contents and associated advertisement provider information which is specified by content providers, the advertisement provider information including advertisement providing conditions for controlling provision of the associated advertisement contents;

an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents and associated advertisement provider

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15 information received by the receiver from the at least one  
~~advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider~~  
~~information for controlling providing of an advertisement and~~  
~~corresponding to the received advertisement contents;~~

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
20 identification data designating the advertisement user terminal  
and associated advertisement usage information specified by  
advertisement users, the advertisement usage information  
including an advertisement specification condition, for  
specifying a desired advertisement, of the ~~at least one~~  
25 ~~advertisement user users;~~

an advertisement provider information extraction unit which  
extracts ~~advertisement contents corresponding to~~ from the  
advertisement information storage unit, the advertisement  
provider information which conforms to ~~in association with the~~  
30 advertisement specification condition included in the stored  
advertisement usage information associated with the  
identification data;

an advertisement contents extracting unit which extracts the  
advertisement contents associated with the advertisement provider  
35 information extracted by the advertisement provider information

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extraction unit, from the advertisement information storage unit;  
and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
contents extracted by said advertisement contents extraction unit  
40 to the ~~at least one~~ advertisement user terminal designated by the  
associated identification data having requested the advertisement  
contents.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended). The advertisement distribution  
system according to claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein said advertisement  
contents extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit  
which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of  
5 advertisement provider information including the searched  
advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a predetermined  
number of items of advertisement provider information included in  
the retrieved items of advertisement provider information.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended). The advertisement distribution  
system ~~according to claim 3, wherein~~ which receives advertisement  
contents from at least one advertisement provider through a

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communications network, and provides at least one advertisement  
5 user with the received advertisement contents through the  
communication network, said system comprising:

an advertising information storage unit which stores  
advertisement contents received from the at least one  
advertisement provider in association with advertisement  
10 provider information for controlling provision of an  
advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement  
contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
15 advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
information; and

20 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the  
at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,

wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
25 advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the

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at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;

30 the advertisement user information includes an advertisement  
specification condition which is to be specified by the at least  
one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input advertisement  
specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents  
corresponding to the advertisement provider information including  
35 the searched advertisement providing condition;

said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement  
selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined  
number of items of advertisement provider information including  
the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a  
40 predetermined number of items of advertisement provider  
information included in the retrieved items of advertisement  
provider information; and

said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than  
a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider  
45 information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random  
numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of  
advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined

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number of items of advertisement provider information  
corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended). The advertisement distribution  
system ~~according to claim 2, wherein~~ which receives advertisement  
contents from at least one advertisement provider through a  
communications network, and provides at least one advertisement  
5 user with the received advertisement contents through the  
communications network, said system comprising:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores  
advertisement contents received from the at least one  
advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider  
10 information for controlling provision of an advertisement and  
corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

15 an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
20 contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the

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at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,

25 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the  
at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;

the advertisement user information includes an advertisement  
specification condition which is to be specified by the at least  
one advertisement user;

30 the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input advertisement  
specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents  
corresponding to the advertisement provider information including  
the searched advertisement providing condition; and

35 said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit,  
which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement  
specification condition when a number of items of advertisement  
provider information including the advertisement providing  
condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search  
40 the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed  
item parameter included in the advertisement specification  
condition.

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Claim 6 (Original). The advertisement distribution system according to claim 5, wherein said changing unit repeatedly changes a corresponding item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition, until the number of items  
5 of advertisement provider information extracted by said advertisement extraction unit reaches the predetermined number.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended). A store terminal device which receives advertisement contents ~~to be sent by an advertisement provider from an advertisement server connected to said store terminal device~~ through a communications network, said store  
5 terminal device comprising:

an advertisement content storage unit which receives a ~~predetermined number of advertisement contents, which are selected and transmitted in accordance with store attribute information of a store having sent the store attribute~~  
10 ~~information from said advertisement server, and advertisement attribute information corresponding to the advertisement contents, and sequentially store stores~~ the received advertisement contents ~~and advertisement attribute information;~~  
a transaction registration processor which registers sales  
15 data for business transactions with a customer;



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an advertisement content specification unit which specifies at least one advertisement content included in the ~~predetermined~~ number of advertisement contents stored in said advertisement content storage unit, when to use an advertisement;

20      a receipt issuing unit which issues a receipt on which the sales data registered by said transaction registration processor and advertisement contents specified by said advertisement content specification unit are printed;

~~an advertisement outputting unit which outputs the advertisement content specified by said advertisement content specification unit;~~

25      an advertisement-usage-~~context~~ amount management unit which updates and retains advertisement usage amount data representing an amount of print of the respective advertisement contents,  
30      every time the advertisement content is printed by said receipt issuing unit ~~output by said advertisement outputting unit,~~ advertisement usage context corresponding to the output ~~advertisement content;~~ and

35      a sending unit which sends the advertisement usage amount ~~context~~ retained by said advertisement-usage-~~context~~ amount management unit to said advertisement server ~~at predetermined intervals.~~

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Claim 8 (Original). The store terminal device according to claim 7, wherein said advertisement specification unit specifies the advertisement content stored in said advertisement content storage unit sequentially in storage order.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended). The store terminal device according to claim 7, wherein:

said advertisement content storage unit stores the advertisement contents and said advertisement attribute

5 information includes representing an advertisement providing condition for an advertisement content corresponding to the advertisement attribute information; and

said advertisement content specification unit specifies, when an advertisement specification condition is input by an advertisement user, an advertisement content corresponding to the  
10 advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement specification condition.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended). The store terminal device according to claim 7, wherein further comprising:

a said transaction registration processor which registers and calculates sales data for each business transaction, at each  
5 business transaction with a customer; and

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10     a said receipt issuing unit which issues a receipt based on  
the calculation done by said transaction registration processor~~7~~  
and ~~a printing unit which~~ prints the advertisement content output  
by said advertisement outputting unit together with the sales  
data on ~~a the receipt to be issued by said receipt issuing unit.~~

5     Claim 11 (Currently Amended). A method for receiving  
advertisement contents sent from form an advertisement provider  
using an advertisement provider terminal through a communications  
network, and sending the received advertisement contents to at  
least one advertisement user terminal from an advertisement  
server, said method comprising the steps of:

10     receiving, from the advertisement provider terminals through  
the communication network, advertisement contents and associated  
advertisement attribute information which is specified by the  
provider of the advertisement contents, the advertisement  
attribute information representing an advertisement providing  
condition for controlling provision of the associated  
advertisement contents;

15     ~~storing the advertisement content sent from the~~  
~~advertisement provider using the advertisement provider terminal~~  
and advertisement attribute information ~~in association with each~~  
~~other~~ received in said receiving step;

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storing advertisement user information sent ~~form~~ from the at  
least one advertisement user using the ~~sent~~ advertisement  
20 contents;

retrieving advertisement attribute information conforming to  
the stored advertisement user information, and extracting  
advertisement contents corresponding to the retrieved  
advertisement attribute information;

25 sending the extracted advertisement contents to the at least  
one advertisement user;

receiving predetermined advertisement contents sent from  
said advertisement server to the at least one advertisement user  
and advertisement attribute information corresponding to the  
30 predetermined advertisement contents, and storing the received  
advertisement contents and the advertisement attribute  
information sequentially in received order;

outputting and specifying one advertisement content included  
in the stored advertisement contents, when using an  
35 advertisement; and

outputting the advertisement content specified by said  
outputting step.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended). ~~The method according to claim~~  
~~11, further comprising the steps of~~ A method for receiving

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- advertising contents sent from an advertisement provider using an advertisement provider terminal through a communications network,
- 5 and sending the received advertisement contents to at least one advertisement user from an advertisement server, said method comprising the steps of:
- storing the advertisement contents sent from the advertisement provider using the advertisement provider terminal
- 10 and advertisement attribute information in association with each other;
- storing advertisement user information sent from the at least one advertisement user using the sent advertisement contents;
- 15 retrieving advertisement attribute information conforming to the stored advertisement user information, and extracting advertisement contents corresponding to the retrieved advertisement attribute information;
- sending the extracted advertisement contents to the at least
- 20 one advertisement user;
- receiving predetermined advertisement contents sent from said advertisement server to the at least one advertisement user and advertisement attribute information corresponding to the predetermined advertisement contents, and storing the received

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- 25 advertisement contents and the advertisement attribute  
information sequentially in received order;  
outputting and specifying one of the advertisement contents  
included in the stored advertisement contents, when using an  
advertisement;
- 30 outputting the advertisement contents specified by said  
outputting step;  
updating and retaining, every time the advertisement content  
is output by said outputting step, advertisement-usage-context  
management information corresponding to the advertisement  
35 content;  
sending the advertisement-usage-context management  
information retained by said updating and retaining step to said  
advertisement server at predetermined intervals;  
obtaining a number of output advertisement contents included  
40 in the advertisement-usage-context management information sent to  
said advertisement server from said at least one advertisement  
user in said sending step;  
determining whether the obtained number of output  
advertisement contents exceeds a maximum number of to-be-provided  
45 advertisement included in the stored advertisement attribute  
information; and

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when it is determined that the obtained number of output advertisement contents has exceeded the maximum number of to-be-provided advertisements, removing the advertisement content  
50 from target advertisement contents to be extracted by said extracting step.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

calculating an amount of money which is ~~changed~~ charged for advertisement charges toward the advertisement provider, based on  
5 the obtained number of output advertisement contents which is obtained by said calculating step; and

issuing a bill representing the amount of money which is calculated by said calculating step, to said advertisement provider.

Claim 14 (Original). The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

calculating a payment amount to be paid to the advertisement user, based on the obtained number of output advertisement  
5 contents obtained by said obtaining step; and

issuing a payment statement representing the payment amount to be paid which is calculated by said calculating step.

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Claim 15 (Currently Amended). A computer readable recording medium which records a program for controlling a computer function as:

- a receiver which receives from the advertisement provider terminals through the communication network advertisement contents and associated advertisement provider information which is specified by content providers, the advertisement provider information including advertisement providing conditions for controlling provision of the associated advertisement contents;
- 10      an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents and associated advertisement provider information received by the receiver from at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling of providing an advertisement;
- 15      an advertisement usage information storage unit which stores identification data designating the advertisement user terminal and associated advertisement usage information specified by advertisement users, the advertisement usage information including an advertisement specification condition representing
- 20      usage of an the advertisement user users;
- an advertisement provider information extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to, from the



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advertisement information storage unit the advertisement provider  
information ~~corresponding to~~ which conforms to the advertisement  
25 specification condition included in the advertisement usage  
information associated with the identification data;

an advertisement content extracting unit which extracts the  
advertisement contents associated with the advertisement provider  
information extracted by the advertisement provider information  
30 extraction unit from the advertisement information storage unit;  
and

a sending unit which sends the advertisement contents  
extracted by said advertisement content extraction unit to the  
advertisement user terminal designated by the associated  
35 identification data.

Claim 16 (New). A computer readable recording medium which  
records a program for controlling a computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores  
advertisement contents received from the at least one  
5 advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider  
information for controlling provision of an advertisement and  
corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

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an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
10 advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;  
an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
information; and  
15 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the  
at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,  
wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
20 advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the  
at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;  
the advertisement-user information includes an  
advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by  
25 the at least one advertisement user;  
the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-  
specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents  
corresponding to the advertisement provider information including  
30 the searched advertisement providing condition;

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said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a  
35 predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider  
40 information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 17 (New). A computer readable recording medium which records a program for controlling a computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one  
5 advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

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an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
10 advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
15 information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the  
at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,

20 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the  
at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;

the advertisement-user information includes an  
25 advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by  
the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-  
specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents  
30 corresponding to the advertisement provider information including  
the searched advertisement providing condition; and

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said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit,  
which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement  
specification condition when a number of items of advertisement  
35 provider information including the advertisement providing  
condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search  
the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed  
item parameter included in the advertisement specification  
condition.

Claim 18 (New). A program data signal embodied in a  
carrierwave for controlling a computer function as:

a receiver which receives, from the advertisement  
provide-terminals through the communication network,  
5 advertisement contents and associated advertisement-provider  
information which is specified by content providers, the  
advertisement provider information including advertisement  
providing conditions for controlling provision of the associated  
advertisement contents;  
10 an advertisement information storage unit which stores  
advertisement contents and associated advertisement-provider  
information received by the receiver;  
an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
identification data designating the advertisement user-terminal

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15 and associated advertisement usage information specified by  
advertisement users, the advertisement usage information  
including an advertisement-specification condition of the  
advertisement users;

20 an advertisement provider information extraction unit which  
extracts, from the advertisement information storage unit, the  
advertisement provider information which conforms to the  
advertisement-specification condition included in the  
advertisement usage information associated with the  
identification data;

25 an advertisement contents extracting unit which extracts the  
advertisement contents associated with the advertisement provider  
information extracted by the advertisement provider information  
extraction unit, from the advertisement information storage unit;  
and

30 a sending unit which sends the advertisement contents  
extracted by said advertisement contents extraction unit to the  
advertisement user-terminal designated by the associated  
identification data.

Claim 19 (New). A program data signal embodied in a  
carrierwave for controlling a computer function as:

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an advertising information storage unit which stores  
advertisement contents received from the at least one  
5 advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider  
information for controlling provision of an advertisement and  
corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
10 advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
information; and

15 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the  
at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,

wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
20 advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the  
at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;

the advertisement-user information includes an  
advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by  
25 the at least one advertisement user;

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the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition;

said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 20 (New). A program data signal embodied in a carrierwave for controlling a computer function as:



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an advertisement information storage unit which stores  
advertisement contents received from the at least one  
5 advertisement provider in association with advertisement  
provider information for controlling provision of an  
advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement  
contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
10 advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
15 information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the  
at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,

20 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the  
at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;

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the advertisement-user information includes an  
25 advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by  
the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input  
advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves  
30 advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement  
provider information including the searched advertisement  
providing condition; and

said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit,  
which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement  
35 specification condition when a number of items of advertisement  
provider information including the advertisement providing  
condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search  
the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed  
item parameter included in the advertisement specification  
40 condition.

Claim 21 (New). A method of issuing a receipt on which  
advertisement content is printed, the method comprising:  
receiving advertisement content from an advertisement  
server, and storing the received advertisement content;

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- 5 registering sales data for business transactions with a  
customer;  
specifying at least one advertisement content in the stored  
received advertisement content;  
issuing a receipt on which the sales data registered and  
10 advertisement content specified are printed;  
updating and retaining advertisement usage amount data  
representing an amount of print of the respective advertisement  
content every time the advertisement content is printed; and  
sending the retained advertisement usage amount retained to  
15 said advertisement server.